(b) The process of right-sizing is a continuous exercise. Indian Railways has been restricting the intake of fresh manpower since the beginning of the last decade. The Staff strength has been reduced from 18.07 lakhs as on 31.3.91 to 15.45 lakhs as on 31.3.2001. If the present trend continues in the current decade, the staff strength would be further reduced to 11.8 lakhs by 2010.

Rail connection between Chennai Central and Chennai Egmore

391.SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Willl the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to connect chennai Central and Chennai Egmore by rail in order to facilitate easy traffic flow;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) to (c) Rail link alreday exists between Chennai Central and Chennai Egmore *via* Basin Bridge/Royapuram. However, a survey has also been conducted for an elevated direct link between Chennai Central and Chennai Egmore. It is found that the link is neither financially justifiable nor is it likely to reduce the inconvenience of any significant number of commuters.

ATMs at Railway Stations

392. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA: Willl the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to set up Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) for withdrawal of money, etc. at important railway stations;

(b) if so, whether any agreement has been entered into with any bank;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) to (b) Yes, Sir.